

ART 34 AMDT

- 18 -

CLAIMS

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A' 5 1. A composite fabric comprising a substrate and a coating (3) applied to the substrate so as to form a continuous sheet adhered to the substrate characterised in that the substrate comprises a mesh of multifilament metal cord (1).

10 2. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 1, characterised in that the substrate is woven and comprises warp and weft cords (1).

15 3. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 2, characterised in that the warp and weft cords (1) are arranged substantially at right angles to each other.

20 4. A composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that interstices between adjacent cords (1) have side dimensions in the range from 0.05 mm to 12 mm.

25 5. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 4, characterised in that interstices between adjacent cords (1) have side dimensions in the range from 3 mm to 10 mm.

6. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 5, characterised in that interstices between adjacent cords (1) have side dimensions in the range from 5 mm to 10 mm.

AMENDED SHEET

- 19 -

7. A composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim and including two or more substrates of multifilament metal cord mesh.

5 8. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 7, characterised in that the mesh pattern of at least two substrates is not coincident.

10 9. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 8, characterised in that the direction of the metal cords (1) is not identical in the at least two substrates.

15 10. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 9, characterised in that the directions of the metal cords (1) in adjacent substrates are off-set from each other by an angle in the range from 5 degrees to 20 degrees.

20 11. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 10, characterised in that the angle is about 10 degrees.

12. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 8, characterised in that the pattern of at least one substrate is offset from that of at least another substrate.

25 13. A composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the multiple filaments of the metal cord are twisted together as one or more strands.

ART 34 AMDT

- 20 -

14. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 13, characterised in that a plurality of strands are twisted together to form a group.

5 15. A composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the filament diameter is in the range from 0.05 mm to 1.25 mm.

10 16. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 15, characterised in that the filament diameter is about 0.18 mm.

15 17. A composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the cords (1) are made of steel.

18. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 17, characterised in that the cords (1) are provided with a corrosion-resistant coating.

20 19. A composite fabric as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 17, characterised in that the cords (1) are made of a corrosion-resistant alloy.

25 20. A composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the coating (3) comprises a polymeric material.

ART 34 AMDT

- 21 -

21. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 20, characterised in that the coating (3) comprises a thermoplastic polymer.

22. A composite fabric as claimed in claim 20 or 21, characterised in that the polymeric material selected from the group consisting of polyurethane, polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF), polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) and rubber.

23. A composite fabric as claimed in any one of claims 20 to 22, characterised in that the coating (3) is applied to the substrate by laminating.

24. A composite fabric as claimed in any one of claims 20 to 22, characterised in that the coating (3) is applied to the substrate by liquid extrusion.

25. A composite fabric as claimed in any one of claims 20 to 22, characterised in that the coating (3) is applied to the substrate by dipping the substrate into molten or semi-molten coating material.

26. A goods container provided with a curtain comprising a sheet of a composite fabric as claimed in any preceding claim; means to suspend the curtain from an upper portion of said container; and means to secure the curtain in place with respect to said container.

- 22 -

27. A goods container as claimed in claim 26, characterised in that the composite fabric does not extend as far as the upper edge portion of the curtain.

5 28. A goods container as claimed in claim 27, characterised in that the upper edge portion of the curtain is provided by a sheet of conventional curtain material secured to the upper edge of the composite fabric.